WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1    1. A method, comprising:

2        determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and

3        when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and

4    transmitting an instant message comprising the text.


1    2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2        when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and

3    transmitting the instant message, wherein the instant message comprises the input text.


1    3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

2        receiving the instant message;

3        determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4        when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input

5    text to speech.


1    4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2        receiving the instant message;

3        determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4        when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to

5    speech.


1    5. The method of claim 4, wherein the speech option at the destination device is

2    independent of the speech option at the origin device.


1    6. A method, comprising:

2        receiving an instant message at a destination-client device, wherein the instant

3    message comprises text; and

4          determining whether a speech option at the destination-client device is selected

5      and if true converting the text to speech.


1      7. The method of claim 6, wherein when the determining operation is false, displaying the

2      text.


1      8. The method of claim 6, wherein the speech option at the destination-client device is

2      independent of a speech option at an origin-client device, wherein the origin-client device

3      originated the instant message.


1      9. The method of claim 6, wherein the instant message is received across a long-lived

2      connection.


1      10. A computing device, comprising:

2          a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech

3      when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message

4      performed speech input.


1      11. The computing device of claim 10, further comprising:

2          a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be

3      transmitted when the speech option is selected.


1      12. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received

2      across a long-lived connection.


1      13. The computing device of claim 9, wherein the received instant message is received via

2      a request-reply pair.


1      14. An instant-messaging system, comprising:

2          an instant-messaging server;

3      a controller to determine whether a speech option is selected at an origin-client

4    device and to send an instant message to the instant-messaging server; and

5      a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text when the speech option is

6    selected, wherein the instant message comprises the text.


1    15. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2    receive the instant message on a long-lived connection.


1    16. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2    send the instant message to a destination-client device.


1    17. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, wherein the instant-messaging server is to

2    drop the instant message when a destination-client device is not connected.


1    18. The instant-messaging system of claim 14, further comprising:

2      a destination controller to determine whether a speech option is selected at a

3    destination-client device; and

4      a text-to-speech converter to convert text to speech when the speech option at the

5    destination-client device is selected independent of the speech option at an the origin-

6    client device.


1    19. An instant-messaging system, comprising:

2      an instant messaging server;

3      an origin-client device, comprising:

4        an origin controller to determine whether an origin-speech option is

5    selected at the origin-client device and to send an instant message to the instant-

6    messaging server,

7        a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text when the origin-speech

8    option is selected, wherein the instant message comprises the text; and

9      a destination-client device, comprising:

10    a destination controller to determine whether a destination-speech option is

11    selected at the destination-client device and to receive the instant message from

12    the instant-messaging server, and

13     a text-to-speech converter to convert the text to speech when the

14    destination-speech option is selected.


1 20. The instant-messaging system of claim 19, wherein the origin-speech option is

2 independent of the destination-speech option.


1 21. A signal-bearing medium comprising instructions, wherein the instructions when read

2 and executed by a processor comprise:

3    determining whether a speech option is selected at an origin device; and

4    when the speech option is selected, converting input speech to text and

5 transmitting an instant message to an instant-messaging server, wherein the instant

6 message comprises the text.


1 22. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:

2    when speech is not selected at the origin device, receiving input text and

3 transmitting the instant message to the instant-messaging server, wherein the instant

4 message comprises the input text.


1 23. The signal-bearing medium of claim 21, further comprising:

2    receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;

3    determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4    when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the text to

5 speech.


1 24. The signal-bearing medium of claim 22, further comprising:

2    receiving the instant message from the instant-messaging server;

3    determining whether a speech option is selected at a destination device; and

4      when the speech option is selected at the destination device, converting the input

5    text to speech.

1    25. The signal-bearing medium of claim 23, wherein the speech option at the destination

2    device is independent of the speech option at the origin device.

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1    26. A pager, comprising:

2        a text-to-speech converter to convert text in a received instant message to speech

3    when a speech option is selected, independent of whether a sender of the instant message

4    performed speech input.

1    27. The pager of claim 26, further comprising:

2        a speech-to-text converter to convert speech to text in an instant message to be

3    transmitted when the speech option is selected.

1    28. The pager of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received across a long-

2    lived connection.

1    29. The pager device of claim 26, wherein the received instant message is received via a

2    request-reply pair.